DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 039 975 24 RC 004 373

AUTHOR Perkins, Larry M.
TITLE Ponca City and White Eagle, Oklahoma. National Study of American Indian Education, Series I, No. 4, Final Report.
INSTITUTION Chicago Univ., Ill.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C. Bureau of Research.
BUREAU NO BR-8-0147
PUB DATE Jan 70
CONTRACT OEC-0-8-080147-2805
NOTE 14p.

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.80
DESCRIPTORS *American Indians, *Community Involvement, Demography, Economic Disadvantagement, *Education, Improvement, Income, *Leadership, Poverty Programs, Social Discrimination, *Socioeconomic Influences, Stereotypes
IDENTIFIERS *Oklahoma

ABSTRACT

As part of the National Study of American Indian Education conducted in 1968-69-70, this final report deals with economy, education, demography, and employment of Indians in the communities of Ponca City and White Eagle, Oklahoma. The study emphasized the attitudes of the people in Ponca City regarding education for all students enrolled in the high school. It was noted that the Indian communities with new leadership were developing awareness among the general population about problems which concerned the Indian people. It was also reported that the White Eagle Development Association, funded through the Episcopal Church in the past and now through National Endowment for the Humanities, has given rise to the most visible and vocal Indian group in the area. The report includes a discussion of the closing of White Eagle School, which served the Indian community for years, in spite of opposition posed by Indian parents. Also included are a thumbnail sketch of Ponca City schools from the reports of the board of education, a map of Indian residential areas, and 4 pages of 1966 Community Audit Reports. (EL)

OE/BR 80147

R·C

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

NATIONAL STUDY OF AMERICAN INDIAN EDUCATION

ED039975

PROJECT OEC-0-8-080147-2805

FINAL REPORT

RECEIVED JUN 12 1970 NMSU E.R.I.C.

Community Background Reports

Series I

No. 4 Ponca City and White Eagle, Oklahoma

Larry M. Perkins
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma
January, 1970

RC004373

NATIONAL STUDY OF AMERICAN INDIAN EDUCATION

The attached paper is one of a number which make up the Final Report of the National Study of American Indian Education.

This Study was conducted in 1968-69-70 with the aid of a grant from the United States Office of Education, OEC-0-8-080147-2805.

The Final Report consists of five Series of Papers:

I. Community Backgrounds of Education in the Communities Which Have Been Studied.

II. The Education of Indians in Urban Centers.

III. Assorted Papers on Indian Education--mainly technical papers of a research nature.

IV. The Education of American Indians--Substantive Papers.

V. A Survey of the Education of American Indians

The Final Report Series will be available from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service after they have been announced in Research in Education. They will become available commencing in August, 1970, and the Series will be completed by the end of 1970.

PONCA CITY AND WHITE EAGLE, OKLAHOMA

Location

Ponca City, with a population of 30,000, is located on the Arkansas River in north central Oklahoma. It is about equidistant (100 miles) from the major cities in the area: Wichita, Kansas; Tulsa and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (Appendix A).

The Ponca Indians who live in and around Ponca City are estimated to comprise about 2,500 persons. However, probably no more than 300 Ponca Indian families live in the city of Ponca itself. Many Ponca Indian families live five miles south of Ponca City in the area called White Eagle (Map 2).

The Ponca Indians hold 935 acres of trust tribal lands, most of which are located west of U.S. Highway 177, south of Ponca City in the White Eagle area. Individually allotted lands held by the Ponca amount to 17,600 acres. Many Ponca Indian homes are located along U.S. 177 north and south of the White Eagle area. These homes, visible from the highway, in no way represent the majority of Ponca home dwellings. Most Ponca residents are scattered over a wide area of land fifteen or twenty miles from White Eagle. Some families live to the south around the community of Marland.

Economy

In sociological terms some justification could be made for designating Ponca City as a "company town," since the local economy has a heavy stake in the fortunes of the Continental Oil Company (CONOCO) which employs 3,500 and Sequoia Refining Corporation with 300 on the payroll. Since the oil companies employ many professional people (engineers, etc.), they (CONOCO) have been strong supporters of the school system. School officials are quick to point out the good working relationship they have with the oil companies. Also, a number of the wives of company employees hold teaching credentials which allow them to be employed by the local school system.

By most definitions Ponca City would probably be classified as a middle to upper-middle class city. Per household income in the city for 1968 was set at $9,259. A recent economic survey conducted by the combined Departments of Economics of the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University estimated the 1970 per

person income of Kay County (Ponca City is located in Kay County) at $3457. The highest per person income in Oklahoma was in Washington County, which contains Bartlesville and the Phillips Petroleum Company, with $5000. Kay County ranks fifth in the state in per capita income.[1]

A drive through the community quickly impresses on the observer the general economic affluence of the White residents. Well landscaped homes and a thriving business district create an atmosphere of general prosperity. The Negro section of the community is located in the southern leg of the community. The major approach to the city from the south skirts this area. Two large road-side billboards block or screen the driver's view of the many ramshackle homes that occupy this area. Many Indian homes are located south of Grand Avenue, the major business street, and west of the north-south Santa Fe railroad tracks. Again, these homes do not seem to reflect the general economic affluence of the White community.

Another general index of the socio-economic status of the White community can be seen in the general grooming of the senior high school students, particularly the girls. One is struck by the fashionable dress and hair styles displayed by them.

The Indian population in and around Ponca City are engaged primarily in low level service jobs. There are no professionals, with the exception of one nurse, who is held in high regard by the junior high school girls as a model of achievement. Many of the young people leave Ponca City in their late teens, going off to larger cities for employment.

As noted above, Ponca City represents a prosperous White middle class community with a fairly large contingent of Indian residents. Although the Indians are pitied for their poverty and generally perceived in stereotypical terms by the Whites, there seems to be an emergent leadership among the Ponca Indians that is prepared to challenge the dominant group's point of view.

Promotional literature prepared for Ponca City by the Chamber of Commerce does not build on the fact that the Ponca Indians are a historical "present" for the community. One is hardly aware that Indians in significant numbers are present in the community.[2]

---

[1]Average income in Oklahoma in 1970 is expected to be about $3328 for each man, woman and child. The lowest per capita income area is Adair County in eastern Oklahoma with $1308. Many Cherokee Indians reside in Adair County.

[2]One Pawnee city community leader related how Pawnee County attempted to join with Kay County (Ponca City) in a combined county Community Action Program (CAP). The Pawnee official indicated that Ponca City leaders did not feel that they had enough poverty in the community (county) to justify a CAP program. One way of coping with poverty is to exercise "cultural blindness."

An indication of the apparent invisibility of Indians in the area is that school leaders were unable to estimate the number of Indians in the school system. Probably about 5 per cent of the Ponca City High School enrollment (grades 7-12) is Indian. These officials were quick to point out that they did not work with youngsters on the basis of their being Indian, Negro or White.

However, awareness of Indians and their concerns is beginning to develop. During the course of the survey many teachers and school officials spoke of the so-called "red power" movement headed by a Ponca Indian, Mrs. Clyde (Della) Warrior. School leaders were quite chagrined over the adverse publicity they felt the Ponca Indians were giving to the community--some of it via national television. Also, the investigation of nearby Chilocco Indian School by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Senator Henry Bellmon of Oklahoma kept school personnel uneasy over studies of their schools.

Trends in the Indian Community

Mrs. Warrior is director of the White Eagle Development Association (WEDA), located in an office building in downtown Ponca City. Staffing the office is done primarily with Ponca Indian women.[1] If there is any semblance of a "red power" movement, the White community seems to associate it with the activities of Mrs. Warrior and the WEDA. Mrs. Warrior has on several occasions confronted Ponca City and White Eagle School officials with alleged acts of discrimination against Indian students as well as arbitrary policy decisions which seem to be against the best interests of Ponca Indian residents.

Funding for the WEDA has been met through a grant from the Episcopal Church. A recent grant was made to WEDA by the National Endowment for the Humanities. This $10,000 grant is to be used to write Ponca history as seen by members of the tribe. Materials developed by the project will be available to help educate children of the Ponca community.

The WEDA probably does not speak for all members of the Ponca Indian tribe. It is, however, the most visible and vocal Indian group known by White residents in Ponca City.

In July of 1969, eight members of the Ponca Indian tribe were

---

[1]It is interesting to note that WEDA is dominated by Ponca Indian women. Although Indian men may be in attendance at formal activities, the female members of the group seem to be the official spokesmen.

named to a new board of directors of the White Eagle Community Center.[1] The community center formerly housed White Eagle School, which was closed in 1969. Since the community center is located near the tribal grounds and a large cluster of Indian homes, usage of the facility will probably be quite good.

Tribal leaders have been concerned about securing outside funding for residential development in the White Eagle area. Home improvement, sewer lines and site development are high on the list of concerns of some members of the tribe. WEDA has been concerned about attracting an industry to Ponca City that would have a pro-Indian hiring policy. Other tribal groups are concerned about the social-ceremonial world of the Ponca Indians.

Education

White Eagle School, the public school serving the Indian community located five miles south of Ponca City, operated for many years as a grade one through eight school. Several years ago the school program was restricted to grades one through six. In 1969 with increasing vocal dissatisfaction from Indian parents over the kind and quality of the educational offerings at White Eagle, (WEDA members were involved in several school principal-Indian confrontations) a decision was made by the State and the local school board to close the school. Students were to be bussed to Ponca City starting in the fall of 1969.[2]

Although there had been dissatisfaction with the White Eagle school, many Indian parents were unhappy at seeing the school suspend operations. Several Ponca Indian parents expressed displeasure with the prospect of sending their children to the Ponca City Public Schools in the fall of 1969, after the all-Indian White Eagle School (grades 1-6) was closed in the spring of 1969. Some of the reasons offered by the parents were the cost of dressing their children appropriate to the Ponca City situation; difficulty the children would have competing with new students and more demanding teachers; plus the loss of freedom in a more highly structured school setting. When the school principal was asked why the school was closing, she replied, "No funds; it is as simple as that." One Ponca Indian leader thought that the closing of White Eagle School would be good for the Indian students in the long run. He indicated that no community could be more prejudiced against the Indian than Ponca City, but if the Indian students could succeed in this school setting they would be able to make their way in the

---

[1]All members of the board are male members of the tribe.

[2]Some of the rumors related to this move were that the Ponca Indians were going to run for the school board elections and ultimately replace the White members. Also, that the White teaching staff was to be replaced with a staff of Indian teachers.

larger White-dominated world.

In Ponca City, the children will be attending a modern non-segregated, public school system which includes nine elementary schools, two junior high schools, and one high school plus one special school for handicapped children. Prior to the closing of the White Eagle Elementary School, almost all secondary pupils went to the Ponca City school while the elementary children remained in the local school. Details of the Ponca City Schools are to be found in Table I.

The Ponca City schools receive some Johnson-O'Malley funds. There is an elected school board. At present there is no Indian member of the board.

Table 1 - A Thumbnail Sketch of the Ponca City Schools, Ponca City, Oklahoma: Board of Education

COST PER CAPITA — (1966-67)

Ponca City $538.33

COST PER HOUR —

It costs about 50.9 cents to instruct a pupil for an hour in the Ponca City Schools.

ATTENDANCE —

Average Daily Attendance 1966-67 6,365

AREA —

244 square miles in the transportation area, 62 square miles in the school district.

ASSESSED NET VALUATION —

1967 ..... $46,707,050.00

LEVIES FOR SCHOOLS — (1967)

General Fund	31.00 Mills
Building Fund	5.00 Mills
County for Schools	4.00 Mills
Sinking Fund	7.64 Mills
TOTAL	47.64 Mills

TRANSPORTATION —

1966-67 a total of 15 buses transported an average of 647 pupils daily. These buses traveled 88,146 miles, or 501 miles each day.

VALUE OF PHYSICAL PLANT —

Buildings and equipment are valued at $10,403,574.00 and insured at 90% of value.

CENSUS — (School Enumeration) 1967

Ages 0-5	2,375
Ages 6-17	6,777

GRADUATES —

May, 1967 503

COLLEGE BOUND —

Of our 503 seniors, 404 requested transcripts for college enrollment in 1967. That is 80%.

TEACHERS —

Teachers, supervisors and administrators	305
Doctor's Degree	1
Master's Degree	108
Bachelor's Degree	196

RETIREMENT —

Teacher retirement system of Oklahoma; Compulsory retirement at age 65; Social Security; Sick leave, 10 days per year, cumulative to 60 days.

ACCREDITATION —

Accredited by the State Department of Education and the North Central Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges.

CAFETERIA —

Our secondary schools served about 520,000 meals last year.

CALENDAR —

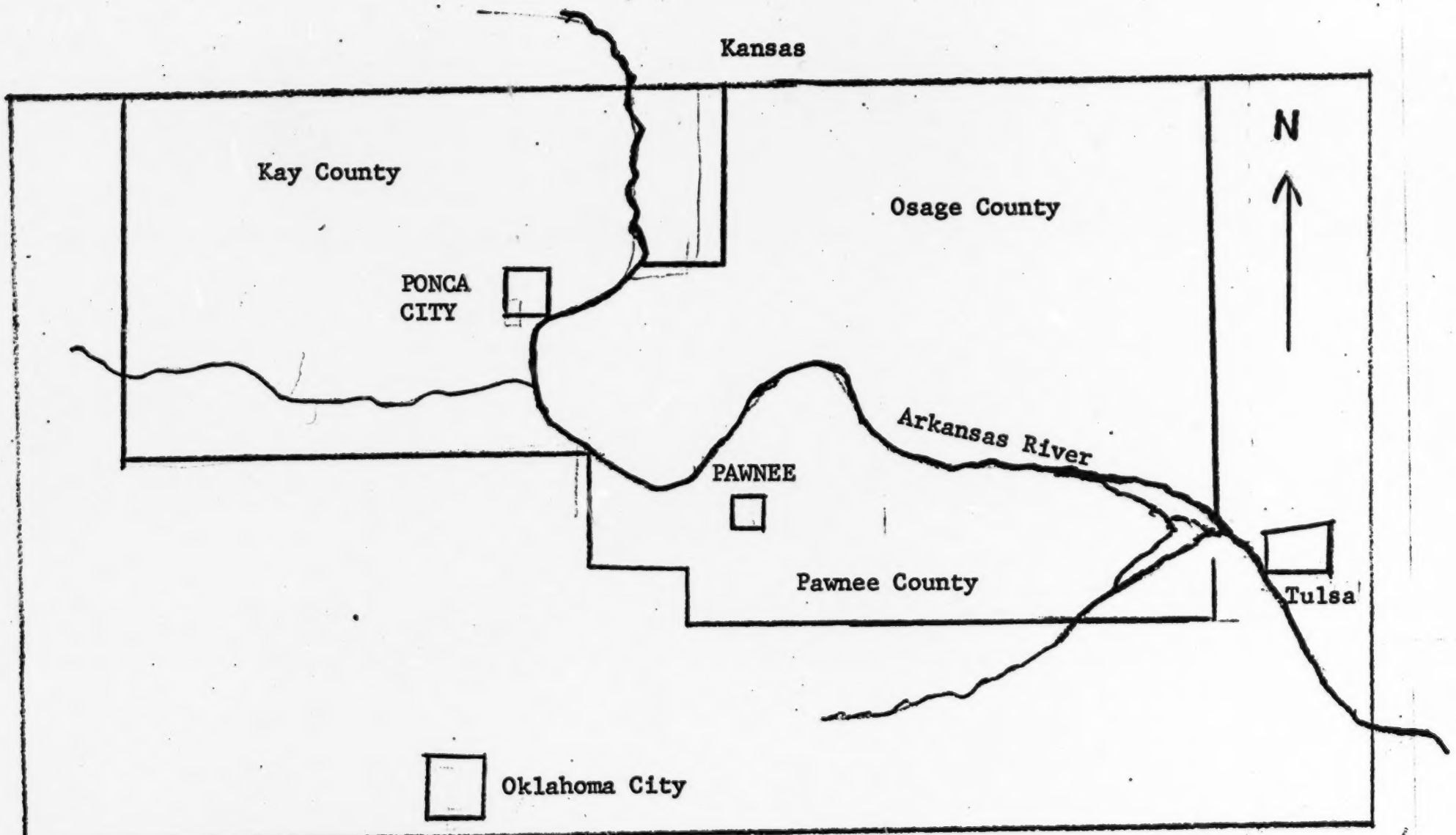
Beginning of School	Sept. 5, 1967
End of First Semester	Jan. 19, 1968
Beginning of Second Semester	Jan. 22, 1968
End of School	May 27, 1968

HOLIDAYS —

Thanksgiving	November 23, 24
Christmas	December 23 to Jan. 1
(both dates included)	
Easter	April 12 to 15
(both dates included)	

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES —

Address	613 East Grand
Telephone	Area Code 405, 765-6614



Map 1 - Location of PAWNEE and PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

PONCA CITY

U.S. 177

5 miles

SECONDARY ROAD

White EAGLE School

Store

N

PONCA INDIAN HOMES

New HOMES

Map 2 WHITE EAGLE COMMUNITY

APPENDIX A

1966 COMMUNITY AUDIT

City: Ponca City County: Kay State: Oklahoma
Location (Distance and direction from major cities): Tulsa, 80 miles southeast; Oklahoma City, 105 miles south; Wichita, Kansas, 90 miles north.

I. POPULATION

	1950	1960	1966
City	20,411	24,411	28,100
County	48,924	51,042	52,165

II. TAXATION

County General Fund	$ 14.00
Sinking Fund (City)	17.46
School Levies	
General Fund	30.00
Building Fund	5.00
Sinking Fund	9.20
Total:	$ 75.66 per $1000 assessed valuation

1965-66 Advalorem Tax
Assessed Ratio to Current Value is Approximately 18%

III. MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

1. Type: Manager-Commission
2. Number of Councilmen: 3 Commissioners including Mayor
3. Number of Policemen: 44
4. Number of Police Cars: 9 cars, 1 gmc, 5 cycles
5. Regular Night Police Patrol: Yes.
6. Number of Firemen: 46; Number Volunteers: 0
7. Fire fighting equipment:
   - One - 100 foot aerial
   - One - 1,000 gallon tank truck
   - Two - 1,000 gallon triple combination pumpers (representing gallons per minute)
   - Two - 750 gallon per minute triple combination pumpers

Two - 500 gallon per minute triple combination pumpers
Four fire stations

8. Local Insurance Key Rate: In Class Five, Oklahoma Law
9. Municipal Revenues and Expenditures:
   a. Total operating budget: $ 3,099,750
   b. Total expenditures for capital improvements: $ 554,205
   c. General Obligation Bonds outstanding: $ 6,744,000
   d. Revenue Bonds outstanding: None
   e. Total Tax Collections: $ 364,000 (1965)
   f. Total Water, Sewer, Garbage Fee Collections & Electric: $ 2,972,034
10. City Planning Commission: Yes
    Zoning Ordinance: Yes
    City Master Plan: Yes

IV. EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

	Public	Parochial or Private
1. Number Elementary Schools	10	3
2. Number Junior High Schools	2	2
3. Number High Schools	1	2
		Special Education Workshops

4. Total Students: 7,080
5. Are schools segregated: No
6. Total Public School Operating Budget: (1965-66) $2,514,671 (Includes Building Funds)
7. Total State and Federal Aid: $ 1,020,000
8. Total Tax Collections: $ 1,663,000
9. Total Bonded Indebtedness: $ 2,181,000
10. What higher educational facilities are available (within 45 miles): Ponca City Business College, Northern Oklahoma College, Oklahoma State University
11. Adult education programs conducted by Public Schools or Junior Colleges: Typing, Shorthand, French, Spanish, Tailoring, Upholstering, Auto Mechanics, Woodwork, Welding, German
12. Do Public Schools include a program for vocational training? Yes - Agriculture, Dist. Ed. programs, auto mechanics, woodwork, welding, building trades

V. RECREATIONAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FACILITIES

1. Number of Public Parks: 17
2. Public Swimming pools: 3
3. Public Golf Courses: 1
4. Private Golf Courses: 1
5. Tennis Courts: 13
6. Theatres: 4
   Little Theatre group - Ponca Playhouse
   Art Exhibits - Ponca City Art Association
   Pioneer Women Museum, Indian Museum

7. Lakes: 1 (Lake Ponca)
8. Youth Centers: 1 (not including church centers)
9. Auditoriums: 2 - Hutchins seats 1,850, 6 additional meeting rooms; civic center seats 975
10. Libraries (City): 1 - No. Volumes 48,000
11. Service Clubs: Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions Club, After-Five Lions Club, A.B.C., Jaycees, Exchange, B.P.W., Soroptimist, others.
12. Other Facilities: Bowling, Skating, Camping, Water Skiing, Boating, Sailing, Hunting (duck), Miniature Golf, Fishing

VI. TRANSPORTATION

1. Two freight lines: Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific connects with main lines in Galveston, Kansas City and Chicago; Santa Fe freight & passenger, two north and two south each day.
2. Bus: Two lines - Continental Trailways and K.K.&O., with 26 daily arrivals and departures to all points (Oklahoma City, Wichita, Tulsa, Dallas, and Amarillo).
3. Air: Central Airlines (feeder), two east-bound, two north, one south and one west, daily.
   a. Is local airport available: Yes
   b. Name of Airport: Ponca City Airport
   c. Distance from city: 4 miles
   d. Length of runways: 4,800
      Surface type: Concrete
      Are runways lighted: Yes
   e. Municipal owned; Private leased to charter
4. Motor Freight-Lines certified to stop in city: Earl Bray, Groendyke, Hambleton, LeeWay, Rocket, Santa Fe Trail Transportation Co., Transcon, REA Express. All points daily.
5. Highways - US and State Highways serving area: East & West, U.S. 60; North U.S. 77; South & East St 11; South St 177; North & South Interstate 35.

VII. RELIGIOUS FACILITIES

Total of 54 churches representing all denominations

VIII. BANKING FACILITIES as of September 20, 1966

Name of Bank	Total Resources	Deposits	Loans
First National	$ 22,617,522	20,664,828	8,012,229
Security	18,936,324	16,804,693	7,701,618
Pioneer National	1,951,880	1,566,966	951,950
PC Savings & Loan	121,451,247	106,300,672	110,380,941

Name of Bank	Capital	Surplus
First National	500,000	500,000
Security	500,000	1,000,000
Pioneer National	112,500	112,500
PC Savings & Loan	(Reserves)	7,935,924

IX. COMMUNICATIONS

1. Newspapers:
   a. Daily Newspapers in City: 1
   b. Weekly or semi-weekly newspapers in city: 0
2. Radio and TV:
   a. Number of radio stations in city: 2
   b. Number of TV stations in city: 0
   c. Number of TV stations which can be received in city: 9

X. COMMUNITY FACILITIES

1. Hospitals
   a. Number: 2
   b. Number of beds: 110 (an additional 50 beds available)
   c. Number of doctors (Physicians & surgeons): 35; 6 out-of-town or a total of 41 using general hospital
   d. Number of dentists: 10; Orthodontists: 2
2. Restaurants and Cafes:
   a. Number in city: 45
   b. Approximate total capacity: 1,000 - other banquet facilities - 1,000
3. Hotels and Motels:
   a. Number of hotels: 2
   b. Number of motels: 12 (5 first-class)
   c. Number of hotel and motel rooms: 500
   d. Are rooms air conditioned: yes
4. A non-profit community-owned & supported Guidance Clinic

XI. CLIMATE

	Month	Average Temp F.
Coldest	Feb.	37.4
Hottest	July.	83.3
Annual Average		63.4

	Month	Average Rainfall
Wettest	May	4.71"
Driest	Jan.	1.04
Annual Average		3.71"